

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SP-02 USIA-15 AID-05

EB-08 NSC-05 EPG-02 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01

CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00

XMB-04 OPIC-06 LAB-04 SIL-01 IGA-02 /120 W

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R 261330Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2507

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

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AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

AMEMBASSY BISSAU

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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USOECD

USEEC

E.O. 11652 : NA

TAGS : ECIN, EGEN, NI

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SUBJ : MEETING OF MINISTERIAL COUNCIL OF ECOWAS

REF : LAGOS 8204

1. SUMMARY: MINISTERIAL COUNCIL OF ECOWAS MET IN LAGOS JULY 18-22.

MEETING FOLLOWS JUNE MEETING OF TECHNICAL COMMISSIONS OF THE  
COMMUNITY AND PRECEDES THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF HEADS OF

STATE OF ECOWAS TO BE HELD IN JANUARY 1978. ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE MINISYERIAL COUNCIL FOLLOW:

2. COUNCIL ENDORSED RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TECHNICAL COMMISSIONS. THESE INCLUDED AUTHORIZATION FOR SECRETARIAT TO CONDUCT STUDIES INTO PROBLEMS OF IMPLEMENTATION. PRINCIPLES ENDORSED WERE:

1) FREE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE WITHIN ECOWAS; 2) ESTABLISHMENT OF A RELIABLE AND EFFICIENT TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK; 3) DEVELOPMENT OF AN EFFICIENT TRANSPORT SYSTEM WITHIN THE COMMUNITY;

4) ESTABLISHMENTS OF A CUSTOMS UNION. ACCORDING TO A FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INFORMATION NEWS RELEASE, THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY WAS TO PREPARE PRACTICAL PROPOSALS TO FACILITATE MOVEMENT OF ECOWAS MEMBER-STATE CITIZENS. IN ADDITION, THE FOLLOWING STUDIES WERE AUTHORIZED: 1) A STUDY ON THE PROBLEMS OF TRANSPORT WITHIN ECOWAS AIMED AT STATING "THE CURRENT CONDITION OF ROADS, RAILWAYS, AIR, MARITIME AND INLAND WATER TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS WITH A VIEW TO IDENTIFYING BOTTLENECKS AND MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION", 2) A STUDY ON THE PROBLEMS OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS WITHIN ECOWAS AIMED AT STATING "THE CURRENT CONDITIONS OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS AND POSTAL SYSTEMS WITH A VIEW TO IDENTIFYING EXISTING PROBLEMS AND MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION"; 3) A STUDY ON CUSTOMS NOMENCLATURE, STRUCTURE OF CUSTOMS TARIFFS AND TRADE FLOWS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AS WELL AS WITH THIRD COUNTRIES.. AND MAKE PROPOSALS FOR THE ELIMINATION OF CUSTOMS TARIFFS AND NON-TARIFF BARRIERS."

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3. COUNCIL ENDORSED IN PRINCIPLE THE HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT AND AUTHORIZED THE SECRETARIAT TO NEGOTIATE THE AGREEMENT WITH THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT. THE COUNCIL ALSO ENDORSED IN PRINCIPLE THE "CONVENTION ON THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES BY ECOWAS MEMBER-STATES." THIS CONVENTION, ACCORDING TO THE NEW NIGERIAN OF JULY 25, STIPULATED "THAT CERTAIN IMMUNITIES AND PRIVILEGES SUCH AS TAX EXEMPTIONS AND DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITIES SHALL BE ENJOYED BY CERTAIN ECOWAS OFFICIALS AND EXPERTS ON MISSION FOR ECOWAS."

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R 261330Z JUL 77  
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AMEMBASSY MONROVIA  
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY  
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AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU  
/AMEMBASSY PARIS 8496  
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4. COUNCIL SET UP A COMMITTEE (CHAired BY NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR  
P.O. AFOLABI) TO STUDY MANPOWER NEEDS OF THE SECRETARIAT.  
ACCORDING TO NEW NIGERIAN, JULY 20, THIS COMMITTEE WILL  
CONSIDER CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF ECOWAS STAFFS INCLUDING STAFF  
REGULATIONS, SALARY STRUCTURE AND PENSION SCHEME. ACCORDING TO  
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THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, DR. ABOUBAKAR OUATTARA, AS QUOTED IN THE  
NIGERIAN HERALD OF JULY 21, AN "APPEAL TO MEMBER STATES" TO  
HELP PROVIDE PERSONNEL FOR THE ECOWAS SECRETARIAT WILL BE MADE,  
BUT IF THE EXPERTS CANNOT BE FOUND WITHIN THE COMMUNITY THEN THE  
SECRETARIAT WILL LOOK FOR THEM OUTSIDE ECOWAS.

5. DEPUTY EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES ARE TO BE NOMINATED, ONE FROM  
GUINEA AND ONE FROM GHANA. A FINANCIAL CONTROLLER WILL BE  
NOMINATED FROM NIGERIA AND A DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR OF ECOWAS  
FUND WILL BE NOMINATED BY THE REPUBLIC OF BENIN.

6. COUNCIL ADOPTED RULES OF PROCEDURE PROVIDING FOR YEARLY  
ROTATION OF COUNCIL CHAIRMANSHIP. NIGERIA'S FEDERAL COMMISSIONER

FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. DR. OMONIYI ADEWOYE, WAS APPOINTED CHIRMAN FOR THE CURRENT ESESSION.

7. DURING THE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT NIGERIA PROVIDED NAIRA 500,000 AND INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES TO HELP THE SECRETARIAT GET STARTED. MEANWHILE, A FURTHER NAIRA 2.6 MILLION (NEARLY DOLS 4 MILLION) WAS APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL AS AN INTERIM BUDGET FOR THE SECRETARIAT. A FUND OF NAIRA 34 MILLION (ROUGHLY DOLS 51 MILLION) WAS APPROVED FOR THE ECOWAS COMPENSATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS. NIGERIA IS THE CONTRIBUTE 32.8 PERCENT OF THE FUND.

8. COUNCIL OF ECOWAS HEADS OF STATE WILL MEET IN JANUARY OF NEXT YEAR TO RATIFY DECISIONS OF THE MINISTEERIAL COUNCIL. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS IS SCHEDULED TO START SOME TIME IN 1978.

9. THE THEME OF "FREEING AFRICA" FROM FOREIGN ECONOMIC DOMINATION WAS NATURALLY A RECURRENT NOTE THROUGHOUT THE CONFERENCE AND IN PRESS COVERAGE. THE APPEAL OF SHEDDING THE YOKE OF IMPREIALISTS AND EX-COLONIALISTS WAS USED TO JUSTIFY AND MAKE ATTRACTIVE THE UNCLASSIFIED

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CONCEPT OF ECOWAS. CRITICISM OF FOREIGN POWERS AND MULTI-NATIONAL CORPORATIONS WAS NOT, HOWEVER, INTENSE. WYMAN

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